

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-15 (Canceled).

Claim 16 (New): A recombinant protein for promoting ceramide transport, said protein comprising 370 residue to 598 residue of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 3 or 397 residue to 624 residue of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or 4.

Claim 17 (New): A drug for use as an antitumor agent, an anti-inflammatory agent, an organoregenesis agent, an anti-infective agent, or a distribution promoting agent used for cosmetics,

said drug comprising as an effective component:

hCERT protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1;

hCERT_L protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;

cCERT protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3;

cCERT_L protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4; or

their recombinant proteins.

Claim 18 (New): A drug for use in detection of a drug for inhibiting ceramide transfer,

said drug comprising as an effective component:

hCERT protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1,

hCERT_L protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2;

cCERT protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3;

cCERT_L protein having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 4; or

their recombinant proteins.

Claim 19 (New): The drug of claim 17 or claim 18, said drug comprising as an effective component:

a recombinant protein containing 370 residue to 598 residue of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 3 or 397 residue to 624 residue of an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or 4.

Claim 20 (New): A base sequence of SEQ ID NOs. 5, 6, 7 or 8 or its recombinant base sequence, said base sequence being used for producing the drug of claim 17 or claim 18.

Claim 21 (New): The base sequence of claim 20, wherein a recombinant base sequence consists of 1108 base pair to 1794 base pair of the base sequence of SEQ ID NO: 5, 1189 base pair to 1872 base pair of the base sequence of SEQ ID NO: 6, 1539 base pair to 2225 base pair of the base sequence of SEQ ID NO: 7, or 1189 base pair to 1872 base pair of the base sequence of SEQ ID NO: 8.

Claim 22 (New): A method of measuring an activity for promoting ceramide release, comprising:

an incubation process for incubating a mixture obtained by mixing a lipid membrane containing ceramide and a drug for promoting ceramide release, a separating process for obtaining a supernatant from the mixture after it has been incubated by separating using centrifugation, and a quantification process for quantifying ceramide contained in the obtained supernatant.

Claim 23 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide release of claim 22, wherein a lipid membrane containing the ceramide is prepared by adding ceramide to the mixed lipid of phosphatidylcholine and phosphatidylethanolamine.

Claim 24 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide release of claim 26, wherein a lipid membrane containing the ceramide is subjected to a supersonic treatment.

Claim 25 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide release of claim 22, wherein a ceramide added to the lipid membrane containing the ceramide is a ceramide radioactively labeled.

Claim 26 (New): A method of measuring an activity for promoting ceramide intermembrane transfer, comprises:

an incubating process for mixing a receiving membrane, a drug for promoting ceramide transfer, a donating membrane and incubating the obtained mixture, a separating process for separating the receiving membrane and the donating membrane by being subjected to a centrifugation after a membrane aggregating agent is selectively added to the mixture obtained in the incubating process, and a quantification process for quantifying ceramide contained by the separated receiving membrane and the donating membrane, respectively.

Claim 27 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide intermembrane transfer of claim 26, wherein the receiving membrane is prepared by the mixed lipid between phosphatidylcholine and phosphatidylethanolamine.

Claim 28 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide intermembrane transfer of claim 26, wherein a donating membrane containing the ceramide is prepared by the mixed lipid containing phosphatidylcholine, phosphatidylethanolamine, lactocylceramide and ceramide.

Claim 29 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide intermembrane transfer of claim 26, wherein a ceramide added to the donating membrane containing the ceramide is a ceramide radioactively labeled.

Claim 30 (New): The method of measuring the activity for promoting ceramide intermembrane transfer of any one of claims 25-29, wherein the selective membrane aggregating agent is a castor seed lectin.